

WASHINGTON, DC— On April 22, 2009, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) read into the Congressional Record a statement honoring the life and career of baseball legend James Barton “Mickey” Vernon, a native of Marcus Hook, Pa. Mickey Vernon, who was born on April 22, 1918, and passed away in September, is a cherished figure in the baseball world and his community.

Congressman Sestak’s statement in honor of Mickey Vernon, read into the Congressional Record on the Floor of the House of Representatives on April 22, 2009:

Madam Speaker,

I rise to acknowledge the achievements of one of the finest athletes and men ever to call the 7th Congressional District of Pennsylvania home. James Barton “Mickey” Vernon, a native of Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania passed away on September 24, 2008 having lived a life of great success and purpose. Long before he became an exceptional professional baseball player, Mickey Vernon’s character and work ethic were shaped by his parents Clarence and Katherine Morris Vernon, his sister Edith, and the good people of Marcus Hook, the Cornerstone of Pennsylvania. In addition, he benefited from the dedicated faculty and coaches of Eddystone High School and Villanova University.

Ranked among the best players of baseball’s Golden Era, Mickey was twice the American League’s batting champ and over a career that included time with the Washington Senators, Cleveland Indians, Boston Red Sox, Milwaukee Braves and Pittsburgh Pirates he played in two thousand four hundred and nine Major League games. In each he played with skill, determination and a complete commitment to his team and teammates.

More important than his skills on the diamond, Mickey Vernon stands apart for his modesty and unfailing service to our nation and his community. I am especially proud to call him ‘Shipmate’. Mickey served in the U.S. Navy during WWII in the brutally hot and dangerous South Pacific. Following that conflict he continued his brilliant career and with his loving wife, Anne, raised a wonderful daughter, Gay.

In a year when the 7th Congressional District lost both Mickey Vernon and Harry Kalas, there is a temptation to feel great pain and sadness. That is understandable, but it is more in keeping with the lives of both men that we celebrate their greatness and decency. I ask that our chamber and our Nation pause to honor James Barton “Mickey” Vernon as a model athlete, Veteran, husband, father, and friend.

You can watch Congressman Sestak deliver the statement on the House Floor by following this link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8N5pv9OiVCM>.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a

series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of “Deep Blue,” the Navy’s anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the “Global War on Terrorism.” He served as President Clinton’s Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.